Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 6, 12, 13, 30 and 31 and add claims 32-77. Also, please cancel claims 9, 10 and 11 without prejudice and disclaimer. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended) A handheld pipette including:

a body portion having a long central axis and shaped to fit in an operator's hand; ~~and~~

a nozzle portion extending from a point on said body portion and at a downward angle θ of approximately 60° to 80° to ~~a~~ the long central axis of said body portion; and

at least one button located on the top of the body portion and operable by a thumb of the operator to effect aspiration and dispensing of fluid through said nozzle portion, the at least one button being aligned with or substantially aligned with the long central axis of the body portion.

Claim 2. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 where θ is approximately 70° to said central axis.

Claim 3. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 wherein said nozzle angle θ is adjustable.

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Claim 4. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 wherein said nozzle angle θ is such as to permit at least one of the operator's wrist, elbow and shoulder to be in a substantially neutral position when the pipette is performing a pipetting operation.

Claim 5. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 wherein said nozzle is designed to have a tip mounted to the end thereof, and wherein said angle θ for the nozzle is such that any tip mounting force is in a direction causing a major component of the force to be applied against and substantially perpendicular to a portion of the operator's hand grasping said body portion which is substantially between a second joint of the operator's fingers and a point slightly behind the operator's knuckles.

Claim 6. (currently amended) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 including a hook extending from a point on said body portion which is sufficiently angularly spaced from the point from which said nozzle extends to permit the hook to fit over a selected portion of the operator's hand when the pipette is being held by the ~~operation~~ operator in a position of use.

Claim 7. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 6 wherein said hook is adjustable to change at least one of the angle by which the hook is spaced from the nozzle, the height on the body portion for the point from which the hook extends and the angle of the hook relative to said central axis.

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Claim 8. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 6 wherein said hook is removably mounted to said body portion, said hook being replaceable with a hook of different size/shape to accommodate at least one of user preference and different hand sizes.

Claims 9-11 (canceled)

Claim 12. (currently amended) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim ~~9~~ 1 wherein said button is operated in a direction at a selected angle to said nozzle.

Claim 13. (currently amended) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim ~~9~~ 1 wherein said button is ergonomically shaped to minimize contact pressure on the operator's hand when the button is operated.

Claim 14. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 including a button on said body which controls ejection of a tip from said nozzle, said button being ergonomically shaped to minimize contact pressure on the operator's hand when the button is operated.

Claim 15. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 wherein the position and angle θ of the nozzle are such that an end of the nozzle adjacent said body portion is closely adjacent the index finger of the operator when properly held.

Claim 16. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 wherein said body has a stable base permitting said pipette to stand upright on a surgace.

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Claim 17. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 16 wherein pipette parameters, including at least the angle θ of said nozzle to an axis of said body portion and length of tip affixed to said nozzle, are selected such that said tip does not touch said surface.

Claim 18. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 wherein said body portion has a bottom which is removable at least in part to provide access to the pipette.

Claim 19. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 including an adapter selectively mountable to said body portion, said adapter adjusting the size of said body portion to better fit operator hand size.

Claim 20. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 including padding on at least a portion of said body portion.

Claim 21. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 wherein portions of said pipette which come in contact with the operator's hand are ergonomically designed to minimize contact pressure for the operator's hand during operation of the pipette.

Claim 22. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 21 wherein portions of said pipette which come in contact with the operator's hand are ergonomically designed so that contact pressure at no point on said pipette exceeds 14 psi.

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Claim 23. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 wherein said nozzle portion extends from a point on an upper section of said body portion.

Claim 24. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1 wherein said body portion is shaped and said nozzle portion is position such that when the pipette is held in an operating position, the nozzle portion is at an angle substantially perpendicular to the operator's forearm.

Claim 25. (original) A handheld pipette including:

a body portion shaped to fit in an operator's hand;

a nozzle portion extending from a first point on an upper section of said body portion; and

a hook extending from a second point on the upper section of said body portion, said second point being angularly spaced by an angle Φ from said first point.

Claim 26. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 25 wherein said hook is adjustable to change at least one of the angle by which the hook is spaced from the nozzle, the height on the body portion for the point from which the hook extends and the angle of the hook relative to a central axis of said body portion.

Claim 27. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 26 wherein the angular spacing between said nozzle and hook is adjustable.

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Claim 28. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 25 wherein said hook is removably mounted to said body portion, said hook being replaceable with a hook of different size/shape to accommodate at least one of user preferences and different hand sizes.

Claim 29. (original) A handheld pipette as claimed in claim 25 including an adapter attachable to said hook to accommodate at least one of user preferences and different hand sizes.

Claim 30. (currently amended) A handheld pipette including:

a body portion having a long central axis and shaped to fit in an operator's hand; ~~and~~

a nozzle portion extending from a point on said body portion and at a downward facing angle θ to ~~a~~ the long central axis of said body portion, said body portion being shaped and said nozzle portion being positioned such that when the pipette is held in an operating position, the nozzle portion is at an angle substantially perpendicular to the operator's forearm; and

at least one button located on the top of the body portion and operable by a thumb of the operator to effect aspiration and dispensing of fluid through said nozzle portion, the at least one button being aligned with or substantially aligned with the long central axis of the body portion.

Claim 31. (currently amended) A handheld pipette including:

a body portion having a long central axis and shaped to fit in an operator's hand; ~~and~~

a nozzle portion extending from a point on said body portion and at a downward facing angle θ to ~~a~~ the long central axis of said body portion, said body portion being shaped and said nozzle portion being positioned such that when the pipette is held in an operating position, any force applied to mount a tip to the nozzle is in a direction causing a major component of the

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force to be applied against and substantially perpendicular to a portion of the operator's hand grasping said body portion which is substantially between a second joint of the operator's fingers and a point slightly behind the operator's knuckles; and

at least one button located on the top of the body portion and operable by a thumb of the operator to effect aspiration and dispensing of fluid through said nozzle portion, the at least one button being aligned with or substantially aligned with the long central axis of the body portion.

Claim 32. (new) A handheld pipette including:

a body portion shaped to fit in an operator's hand; and

a nozzle portion extending from a point on said body portion and at a downward angle θ of approximately 60° to 80° to a central axis of said body portion, wherein

said nozzle angle θ is adjustable.

Claim 33. (new) A handheld pipette including:

a body portion shaped to fit in an operator's hand;

a nozzle portion extending from a point on said body portion and at a downward angle θ of approximately 60° to 80° to a central axis of said body portion; and

a hook extending from a point on said body portion which is sufficiently angularly spaced from the point from which said nozzle extends to permit the hook to fit over a selected portion of the operator's hand when the pipette is being held by the operator in a position of use.

Claim 34. (new) A handheld pipette including:

a body portion shaped to fit in an operator's hand;

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a nozzle portion extending from a point on said body portion and at a downward angle θ of approximately 60° to 80° to a central axis of said body portion; and

a hook extending from a point on said body portion which is sufficiently angularly spaced from the point from which said nozzle extends to permit the hook to fit over a selected portion of the operator's hand when the pipette is being held by the operator in a position of use, wherein

said hook is adjustable to change at least one of the angle by which the hook is spaced from the nozzle, the height on the body portion for the point from which the hook extends and the angle of the hook relative to said central axis.

Claim 35. (new) A handheld pipette including:

a body portion shaped to fit in an operator's hand;

a nozzle portion extending from a point on said body portion and at a downward angle θ of approximately 60° to 80° to a central axis of said body portion; and

a hook extending from a point on said body portion which is sufficiently angularly spaced from the point from which said nozzle extends to permit the hook to fit over a selected portion of the operator's hand when the pipette is being held by the operator in a position of use, wherein

said hook is removably mounted to said body portion, said hook being replaceable with a hook of different size/shape to accommodate at least one of user preference and different hand sizes.

Claim 36. (new) A handheld pipette including:

a body portion shaped to fit in an operator's hand;

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a nozzle portion extending from a point on said body portion and at a downward angle θ of approximately 60° to 80° to a central axis of said body portion; and

an adapter selectively mountable to said body portion, said adapter adjusting the size of said body portion to better fit operator hand size.

Claim 37. (new) A handheld pipette including:

a body portion shaped to fit in an operator's hand;

a nozzle portion extending from a point on said body portion and at a downward angle θ of approximately 60° to 80° to a central axis of said body portion; and

padding on at least a portion of said body portion.

Claim 38. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

θ is approximately 70° to said long central axis.

Claim 39. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

said nozzle angle θ is adjustable.

Claim 40. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

said nozzle angle θ is such as to permit at least one of the operator's wrist, elbow and shoulder to be in a substantially neutral position when the pipette is performing a pipetting operation.

Claim 41. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

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said nozzle is designed to have a tip mounted to the end thereof, and wherein said angle θ for the nozzle is such that any tip mounting force is in a direction causing a major component of the force to be applied against and substantially perpendicular to a portion of the operator's hand grasping said body portion which is substantially between a second joint of the operator's fingers and a point slightly behind the operator's knuckles.

Claim 42. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30 including a hook extending from a point on said body portion which is sufficiently angularly spaced from the point from which said nozzle extends to permit the hook to fit over a selected portion of the operator's hand when the pipette is being held by the operator in a position for use.

Claim 43. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 42, wherein

said hook is adjustable to change at least one of the angle by which the hook is spaced from the nozzle, the height on the body portion for the point from which the hook extends and the angle of the hook relative to said long central axis.

Claim 44. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 42, wherein

said hook is removably mounted to said body portion, said hook being replaceable with a hook of different size/shape to accommodate at least one of user preferences and different hand sizes.

Claim 45. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

said button is operated in a direction at a selected angle to said nozzle.

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Claim 46. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

said button is ergonomically shaped to minimize contact pressure on the operator's hand when the button is operated.

Claim 47. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30 including

a button on said body which controls ejection of a tip from said nozzle, said button being ergonomically shaped to minimize contact pressure on the operator's hand when the button is operated.

Claim 48. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

the position and angle θ of the nozzle are such that an end of the nozzle adjacent said body portion is closely adjacent the index finger of the operator when properly held.

Claim 49. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

said body has a stable base permitting said pipette to stand upright on a surface.

Claim 50. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 49, wherein

pipette parameters, including at least the angle θ of said nozzle to an axis of said body portion and a length of a tip affixed to said nozzle, are selected such that said tip does not touch said surface.

Claim 51. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

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said body portion has a bottom which is removable at least in part to provide access to the pipette.

Claim 52. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30 including

an adapter selectively mountable to said body portion, said adapter adjusting the size of the said body portion to better fit operator hand size.

Claim 53. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30 including

padding on at least a portion of said body portion.

Claim 54. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

portions of said pipette which come in contact with the operator's hand are ergonomically designed to minimize contact pressure for the operator's hand during operation of the pipette.

Claim 55. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 54, wherein

portions of said pipette which come in contact with the operator's hand are ergonomically designed so that contact pressure at no point on said pipette exceeds 14 psi.

Claim 56. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

said nozzle portion extends from a point on an upper section of the said body portion.

Claim 57. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 30, wherein

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said body portion is shaped and said nozzle portion is positioned such that when the pipette is held in an operating position, the nozzle portion is at an angle substantially perpendicular to the operator's forearm.

Claim 58. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31, wherein θ is approximately 70° to said long central axis.

Claim 59. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31, wherein said nozzle angle θ is adjustable.

Claim 60. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31, wherein said nozzle angle θ is such as to permit at least one of the operator's wrist, elbow and shoulder to be in a substantially neutral position when the pipette is performing a pipetting operation.

Claim 61. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31, wherein said nozzle is designed to have a tip mounted to the end thereof, and wherein said angle θ for the nozzle is such that any tip mounting force is in a direction causing a major component of the force to be applied against and substantially perpendicular to a portion of the operator's hand grasping said body portion which is substantially between a second joint of the operator's fingers and a point slightly behind the operator's knuckles.

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Claim 62. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31 including a hook extending from a point on said body portion which is sufficiently angularly spaced from the point from which said nozzle extends to permit the hook to fit over a selected portion of the operator's hand when the pipette is being held by the operator in a position for use.

Claim 63. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 62, wherein

said hook is adjustable to change at least one of the angle by which the hook is spaced from the nozzle, the height on the body portion for the point from which the hook extends and the angle of the hook relative to said long central axis.

Claim 64. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 62, wherein

said hook is removably mounted to said body portion, said hook being replaceable with a hook of different size/shape to accommodate at least one of user preferences and different hand sizes.

Claim 65. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31, wherein

said button is operated in a direction at a selected angle to said nozzle.

Claim 66. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31, wherein

said button is ergonomically shaped to minimize contact pressure on the operator's hand when the button is operated.

Claim 67. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31 including

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a button on said body which controls ejection of a tip from said nozzle, said button being ergonomically shaped to minimize contact pressure on the operator's hand when the button is operated.

Claim 68. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31, wherein

the position and angle θ of the nozzle are such that an end of the nozzle adjacent said body portion is closely adjacent the index finger of the operator when properly held.

Claim 69. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 1, wherein

said body has a stable base permitting said pipette to stand upright on a surface.

Claim 70. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 69, wherein

pipette parameters, including at least the angle θ of said nozzle to an axis of said body portion and a length of a tip affixed to said nozzle, are selected such that said tip does not touch said surface.

Claim 71. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31, wherein

said body portion has a bottom which is removable at least in part to provide access to the pipette.

Claim 72. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31 including

an adapter selectively mountable to said body portion, said adapter adjusting the size of the said body portion to better fit operator hand size.

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Claim 73. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31 including padding on at least a portion of said body portion.

Claim 74. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31, wherein portions of said pipette which come in contact with the operator's hand are ergonomically designed to minimize contact pressure for the operator's hand during operation of the pipette.

Claim 75. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 74, wherein portions of said pipette which come in contact with the operator's hand are ergonomically designed so that contact pressure at no point on said pipette exceeds 14 psi.

Claim 76. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31, wherein said nozzle portion extends from a point on an upper section of the said body portion.

Claim 77. (new) The handheld pipette as claimed in claim 31, wherein said body portion is shaped and said nozzle portion is positioned such that when the pipette is held in an operating position, the nozzle portion is at an angle substantially perpendicular to the operator's forearm.

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